

Pipistrellus mediterraneus Cabrera, 1904 should be put on the Official List instead of *P. pygmaeus* Leach, 1825. *P. mediterraneus* is defined by the lectotype designated by Ibáñez & Fernández, 1989.

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(2) A.M. Hutson

The Bat Conservation Trust, 15 Cloisters House, 8 Battersea Park Road, London SW8 4BG, U.K.

I write to urge the Commission to accept the application by Jones & Barratt. It is an effective way of stabilizing the first available and appropriate names for the two *Pipistrellus* species.

At a recent meeting (February 2000) of the Advisory Committee to the Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe (an Agreement of the Bonn Convention), the question was discussed and it was apparent that authors from different countries were starting to use both of the names *P. pygmaeus* (Leach, 1825) and *P. mediterraneus* Cabrera, 1904 for the recently recognized second species.

There are more than 15 names which might apply to either species, and *mediterraneus* is one of the most recent of them (see Corbet, 1978, 1984; Pavlinov et al., 1995). For long-term stability it is desirable to use the earliest of the names, and I support the designation of neotypes for the nominal species *Vespertilio pipistrellus* Schreber, 1774 and *V. pygmaeus* Leach, 1825 as proposed by Jones & Barratt.

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(3) Gareth Jones

School of Biological Sciences, University of Bristol, Woodland Road, Bristol BS8 1UG, U.K.

I am pleased that the comments published (BZN 57: 49–50) from six contributors and from Hutson (above) show strong support for the use of the names *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and *P. pygmaeus* for the 45kHz and 55kHz phonic types of pipistrelle. The only opposition so far has come from Helversen, Mayer & Kock in their comment above, who recommend use of the name *P. mediterraneus* for the 55kHz phonic type. There are several reasons for preferring the name *pygmaeus* to *mediterraneus*:

(a) It is much older. There are at least 15 synonyms available between *pygmaeus* (1825) and *mediterraneus* (1904), and if any of these could be shown (e.g. by DNA analysis of specimens) to refer to the 55kHz phonic type the nomenclature of the species would be forced to change again. Hence *pygmaeus* provides a much more stable solution than *mediterraneus*.

(b) G.H.H. Tate (1942; *Results of the Archbold Expeditions*, no. 47, p. 238) regarded *mediterraneus* as a race of *P. nathusii*, so there is some confusion in the history of the name.

(c) The name *P. pygmaeus* is now being used in publications (e.g. those by Häussler and his colleagues, mentioned by Helversen, Mayer & Kock in their comment, and by Russo & James in a paper (*Mammalia*, in press)) on the occurrence of the two cryptic species in Italy. *The New Handbook on British Mammals* is about to go to press, and will be using the names *P. pipistrellus* and *P. pygmaeus* for the two species. To use *mediterraneus* now would create confusion.

(d) The application in Case 3073 by Jones & Barratt received no objections at a workshop at the 7th European Bat Research Symposium (Krakow, 23–27 August 1999).

Like Helversen & Mayer, Barratt, Jones & Racey have developed distinctive microsatellite markers for the cryptic species. We have been unable to extract DNA from Leach's holotype of *P. pygmaeus*, and believe it is unlikely that genetic analysis of that specimen is possible with current techniques. The specimen is not suitable for use in investigations because it is an infant; it cannot be allocated to the 45 kHz phonic type (cf. the comment by Helversen, Mayer & Kock) on the basis of its present colour. Preliminary investigations of DNA-typed preserved specimens suggest that the length proportions of the second and third phalanges of the third digits cannot separate the species conclusively.

I urge the Commission to approve Case 3073 as soon as possible.